

EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 11, 2026

⌘ Meeting Agenda

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Minutes from the Annual Meeting 2025

Appointment of Annual Meeting Secretary

Appointment of Tellers

Report of the Nominating Committee

Vote

Senior Warden's Report

Financial Report

Stewardship Report

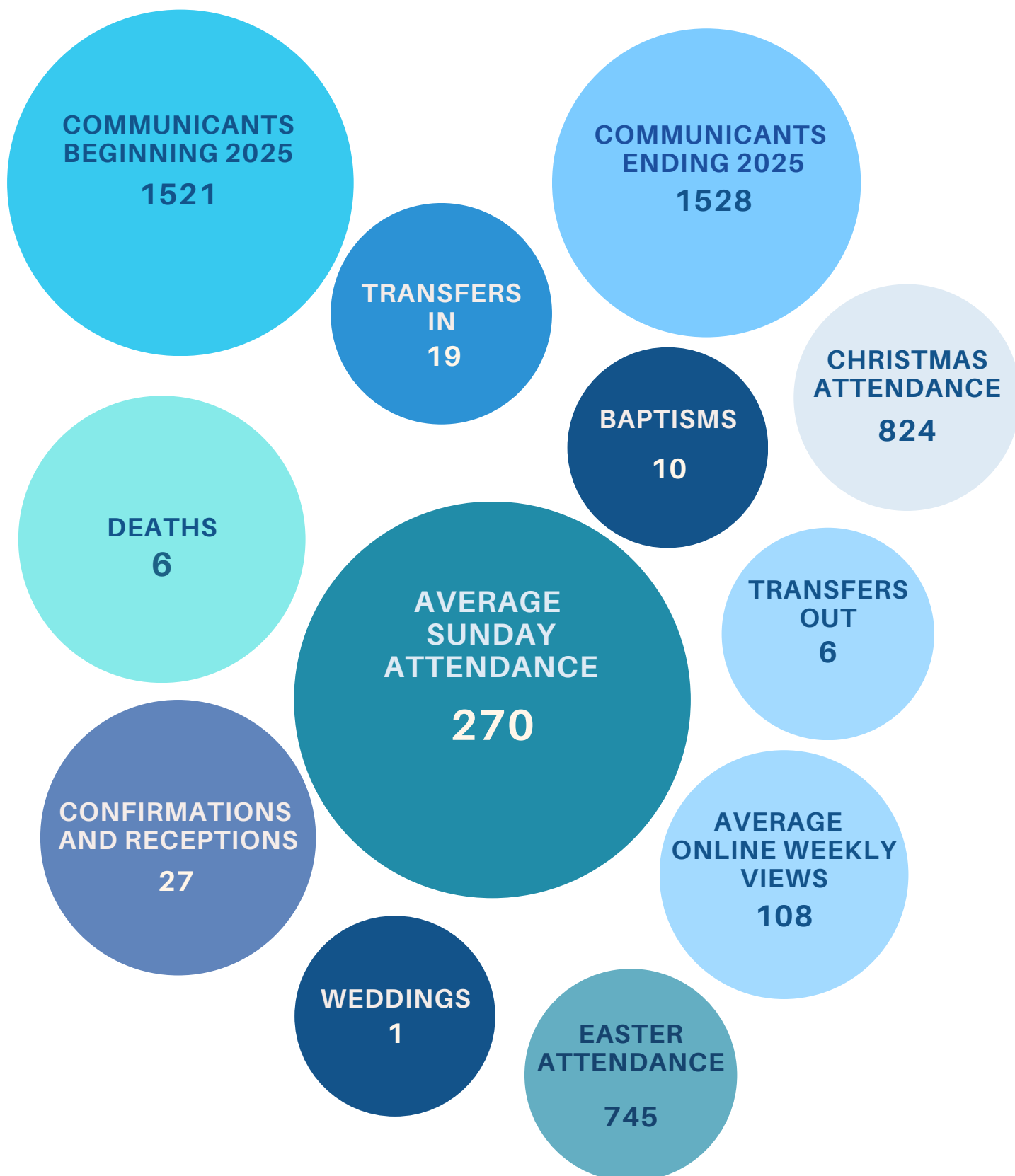
Rector's Report

Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members

Commissioning of New Officers

Blessing and Dismissal

⌘ Parish Snapshot



⌘ Prior Minutes

ANNUAL MEETING EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH JANUARY 12, 2025

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Reverend Katie Bradshaw called the Annual Meeting to order at 11:50 a.m. She led the parish in prayer and declared the meeting open.

Minutes from the Annual Meeting 2024

Reverend Katie called for a motion from the floor to approve the minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting as presented in the 2024 Annual Report. The motion was seconded from the floor and approved.

Appointment of the Annual Meeting Secretary

Sandy Jarrett was appointed to be the Recording Secretary for the Annual Meeting.

Appointment of Tellers

Kim Ripps appointed Hart Roberts, Susan Wilson, Linda Dodson and Jerry Sullivan to serve as tellers for the election of the Vestry class. A motion was made and seconded to accept these tellers.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Butch Bush provided a report from the Vestry Nominating Committee. The committee was comprised of the four outgoing Vestry members, Ralph NeSmith, Cissy Hutchinson, Erica Golding and Butch Bush in addition to at-large members, Peg Wood, Erika Greene and Rich Connelly. Nominations were asked from the congregation and a slate was presented and accepted by the Vestry. Butch Bush gave a brief introduction of the incoming Vestry class and Peg Wood introduced Maggie Hancock. Mary Moore most recently served as the Vestry Clerk for the past 7 years. Jonathan Fox has been involved with the Thrift House and is in charge of organizing the Ushers for all the church services. Louis Duhe has been serving on the Finance Committee. Maggie Hancock previously served on the Vestry at Church of the Cross.

Ballots were distributed to eligible voters.

Senior Warden's Report

The Senior Warden's report is outlined in the Annual Report. Butch Bush praised Reverend Katie for everything she has done for Emmanuel. Weyman Johnson presented the following resolution: Whereas Reverend Katie Bradshaw delivered her first sermon and Eucharist for Emmanuel Episcopal Church on September 24, 2023; and began work earlier that week; was celebrated at a welcome reception on September 26, 2023; and was installed as rector on December 6, 2023. We the 2024 Vestry of Emmanuel Episcopal Church thank God almighty, and we thank Reverend Katie, for her superb leadership, preaching, and pastoring, and we pray that she continue in God's work, leading God's people, and striving to bring God's kingdom. 2024 Vestry of Emmanuel Episcopal Church Athens, Georgia Diocese of Atlanta

Reverend Katie expressed her honor to be with us and the joy here at Emmanuel.

Financial Report

Finance Committee chair, Rob Hoyt stated that we are in good operating condition. Reverend Katie regularly attends the monthly Finance Committee meetings. The Director of Finance, Darcie St. Onge is responsible for the financial reporting and issuance of checks. Laura Woodson our treasurer, reviews the financial transactions as another level of control. Additionally, checks are signed by one of three people - Rob Hoyt, Butch Bush or Dee Forrester. An audit is conducted by an external audit firm and the audit is being completed on time. The church has a slight surplus in the operations this year and some of the funds were moved into Property Reserves. The budget also reflects new activities for Parish Life. Overall, we have a conservative but progressive budget. The Thrift House continues to do tremendous work and revenue is used for MEMC and upkeep and maintenance of the Thrift House. The Day School had early challenges but the finances have continued to be fairly solid. Details of the budget and finances are outlined in the Annual Report. There were no questions for Rob Hoyt.

Stewardship Report

Phyllis Niolon thanked everyone for a successful stewardship "God is Among Us...for the Saints of God are just folks like us". As of this morning, we have 170 pledges and 14 new pledges.

Rector's Report

Reverend Katie noted that the Annual Report includes further details on her report. She showed a slide show of parish activities and how many volunteers it takes to assist the clergy in the worship services. She expressed her thanks for the help provided to support the clergy in the worship services. She also highlighted Bigger Vision ministry, the number of volunteers involved and the continued need for volunteers. Reverend Katie mentioned Susan Draper and her ideas for Parish Life activities including a hoedown which will take place this year. She thanked the interns who help with the youth and noted we averaged 80-90 people every Wednesday night. Sharon Rockholt has been the coordinator for Family Promise and is retiring from this position. Reverend Katie thanked Sharon for her service and to please let Reverend Katie know if you are interested in participating in this ministry. We are sponsoring Family Promise in a new grant from the Episcopal Community Foundation and if awarded, it will be the biggest grant the Foundation has ever given at \$30,000. The grant would be used to complete a third house for those experiencing homelessness. The meeting was open to questions for Reverend Katie.

John Robertson inquired about updating the Common room for the hard of hearing. Panels were suggested as a possibility and perhaps Erwin Greene can advise. Sacred Ground is starting in February with Mary Moore as a facilitator. Reverend Katie mentioned that Formation and Pastoral opportunities are listed in the Annual Report. Martha Babendreier was thanked for her work and the question was asked as to how to strengthen the youth program. Reverend Katie hopes to hire an Associate Rector this year who will be dedicated to working with the youth.

Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members

Reverend Katie recognized the outgoing Vestry members, Butch Bush, Ralph NeSmith, Cissy Hutchison and Erica Golding and thanked them for their service.

Results of the Election

The Vestry slate presented was voted unanimously on the first ballot.

Commissioning of New Vestry

Reverend Katie introduced the incoming Vestry members, Louis Duhe, Jonathan Fox, Mary Moore and Maggie Hancock, and commissioned them for service.

Blessing and Dismissal

The Annual Meeting ended with a blessing from Reverend Clayton Harrington and dismissal at 12:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Sandy Jarrett (Recording Secretary)

⌘ Sr. Warden's Report

Reflecting on 2025, I am awed by the growth, vitality, dedicated service, and deepening relationships that have flourished within our Emmanuel community. With wisdom, vision, and joy, Rev. Katie continues to guide us on this shared journey. What an inspiring year it has been!

The sounds of Emmanuel life this year took many forms—the words of worship from packed pews, the resounding organ music and choir voices, the abundant laughter on Wednesday nights, the airborne notes of Bluegrass Mass, the unbridled joy of Christmas and Easter celebrations, warm conversations over Sunday coffee, fellowship at Foyers Dinners, reflective meditations, animated book discussions, quiet study, and the softly spoken words of love and support offered in times of need.

2025 has been a year of growth at Emmanuel. New worshippers joined us, new friendships formed, and we continued to steward and share the enduring gifts of those who came before us with the wider Athens community. As Bishop Wright reminded us during his recent visit, “Athens needs a strong Emmanuel, Georgia needs a strong Emmanuel, and our world needs a strong Emmanuel.” We enter 2026 prepared to continue walking together in faith.

It has been an honor to serve as Senior Warden, and I am grateful to have served alongside Weyman Johnson, Junior Warden. On behalf of the congregation, I extend heartfelt thanks to Sunil Alexander, Katherine Byrne, and Phyllis Niolon for their faithful service as Vestry members over the past three years. With full hearts, we welcome our incoming Vestry class as they take up this important work.

“The problem with the world is that we draw the circle of our family too small,” observed Mother Teresa. May we continue to draw our Emmanuel circle ever wider in the year ahead.

Peace,
Kim

⌘ Rector's Report

"Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being. We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." Book of Common Prayer, p. 100.

As I reflect over this past year, this prayer from the Daily Office continually comes to mind. I truly believe that the Holy Spirit has been living and moving amongst us here at Emmanuel. The Holy Spirit continues to stretch us spiritually and to grow us as the Body of Christ at work in the world.

We have shared many meaningful experiences this past year. Lent began early in 2025, and we journeyed together through Barbara Brown Taylor's Holy Eucharist. Through book groups and a speaker series, we explored how God manifests in our own faith journeys and those of others. Additionally, book studies, Bible studies, a Sacred Ground circle, Natural Spirituality, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, an Enneagram class, Centering Prayer, and a new Art and Spirituality class enriched the lives of Emmanuel parishioners.

The year brought several staff transitions. The Rev. Cheryl Brainard and the Rev. Marycelis Otero both joined us as part-time priest associates. In the Fall, the Rev. Clayton Harrington received a call to serve as Rector of St. Matthew's in Charleston, West Virginia. Clayton was a tremendous asset to Emmanuel for many years, and he will be deeply missed.

We continue to face challenges with the Emmanuel Episcopal Day School. Enrollment and financial issues have plagued the school since Covid. In fact, I have spent at least fifty percent of my time as your Rector addressing personnel issues, responding to parental concerns, and managing the school's financial struggles. This year, I formed a Day School Advisory Board whose members have generously given their time and expertise. This Fall, questions again arose regarding fair compensation of the Day School Director. These questions renewed the broader conversations about the long-term viability of the school. Accordingly, the Vestry and I have invited the President of the National Association of Episcopal Schools to join us for our 2026 Vestry Retreat. With his guidance, we will face important and challenging decisions about the future of the school.

In the pages that follow, you will find reports on parish activities, worship, outreach, and finances. These offer brief glimpses into the joys the Holy Spirit has given us throughout the year. For me, that joy was especially evident in the eight baptisms on All Saints' Sunday and the twenty-eight confirmations, receptions, and reaffirmations that took place last weekend. Emmanuel, God is truly amongst us.

Thanks be to God.

~ The Rev. Katie Bradshaw+

Treasurer's Report

	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	DRAFT Budget 2026
REVENUE			
Pledges	\$900,000.00	\$853,085.03	\$930,000.00
Offerings and Contributions	\$172,000.00	\$221,639.00	\$185,000.00
Endowments and Investments	\$123,900.00	\$121,997.00	\$123,900.00
Other	\$64,200.00	\$69,626.00	\$89,600.00
	\$1,260,100.00	\$1,265,983.03	\$1,328,500.00
EXPENSES			
Ministry Commitments			
Episcopal Ministry	\$95,769.00	\$95,769.00	\$108,629.00
Community Ministry	\$110,000.00	\$101,970.00	\$110,000.00
	\$205,769.00	\$197,739.00	\$218,629.00
Parish			
Parish Programs	\$53,087.00	\$41,520.00	\$49,387.00
Worship and Music	\$50,000.00	\$40,674.00	\$55,000.00
	\$103,087.00	\$82,194.00	\$104,387.00
Operating Expenses			
Clergy and Staff	\$544,871.00	\$470,725.00	\$542,245.00
Employee Benefits	\$136,830.00	\$143,810.00	\$176,859.00
Office Services	\$79,360.00	\$82,073.00	\$98,500.00
Buildings/Grounds/Utilities	\$100,000.00	\$125,637.00	\$100,000.00
Insurance	\$70,409.00	\$56,359.00	\$60,653.00
Building Projects and Reserves	\$19,750.00	\$75,000.00	\$26,000.00
	\$951,220.00	\$953,604.00	\$1,004,257.00
Total Expenses	\$1,260,076.00	\$1,233,537.00	\$1,327,273.00
Net	\$24.00	\$32,446.03	\$1,227.00

⌘ Facilities and Grounds

In 2025, we made several important investments in our campus. A landscape refresh in the front of the church enhanced the beauty and welcome of our main entrance. We benefited from having a large group of volunteers who helped with this refresh, including spreading a lot of mulch! In addition, Drew Aiken agreed to become the volunteer coordinator for buildings and grounds projects.

A sign committee was formed with Ralph Nesmith, John Wyle, Katherine Byrne, Bob Davis, and Rev. Katie. We were able to refresh signs across campus and install a new sign on Prince Avenue. We hope the new signage provides improved visibility and communication with the wider community.

Beyond the grounds themselves, we also undertook significant facility improvements that support the long-term stewardship of our buildings, including a major investment in the Nave HVAC system and upgraded door lock security throughout the campus.

In addition, with the help of Ross Watson, we conducted research into improving hearing accessibility in both the Common Room and the Nave, laying the groundwork for future enhancements. We look forward to implementing these enhancements in 2026.

Together, these efforts reflect our commitment to maintaining a campus that is welcoming, safe, and supportive of worship and community life.

Bob Davis

⌘ Endowment

During calendar year 2025, we continued our longstanding practice of making a 4% distribution to the Church for outreach and other uses designated by the fund donors and the Vestry. This distribution (based on prior years' balances) totaled approximately \$190,000.

Also during 2025, the Vestry and the Endowment Board of Trustees approved a one-time special distribution to the church of \$150,000, to help pay for two special capital improvements scheduled for 2026. These include necessary equipment to improve auditory capabilities in our buildings, and repair of doors on the Prince Avenue face of the building. We ended the year with a total fund balance of approximately \$5,647,000, a \$600,000 increase over year-end 2024 due to investment growth.

Our funds are professionally managed by State Street Investment Management, with administrative support from the Episcopal Church Foundation. A Board of Trustees appointed by the Vestry oversees the management. For 2025, the Board of Trustees was comprised of Susan Wilson(Chair), John Robertson (Vice Chair), Patti Hoyt (Secretary), Kathy Dixon, Parker Morgan, and Crysty Odom.

Susan Wilson

⌘ Outreach/MEMC

The Missions and Extended Ministries Committee meets quarterly to make recommendations for outreach grants to the community. These grants are made possible by funds from the Emmanuel Endowment. In 2025, the MEMC recommended, and the Vestry approved, grants as follows:

YMCA	\$8,000
YWCO	\$8,000
CASA de Amistad	\$6,000
The Cancer Foundation	\$10,000
Farm RX (Athens Farmers)	\$1,500
Athens Parent Wellbeing	\$1,850
Family Promise	\$5,000
Episcopal Relief and Development	\$4,000
The Ark	\$8,000
Our Daily Bread	\$8,000
Books for Keeps	\$6,000
Love Craft	\$8,750
Sideway Sunlight Ministry	\$2,000
Kate's Club	\$3,000
Athens Community Council on Aging	\$5,000
Athens Area Homeless Coalition	\$7,000
Brightpaths	\$7,000
Total	\$99,100

⌘ Parish Life

Emmanuel Episcopal Church is a vibrant and active. Throughout the year Emmanuel provides many opportunities for parishioners to build community and develop friendships by providing the time and space to strengthen our faith.

We welcome all to join in the planning, preparing, and conducting the events. Parishioners collaborate with one another to make our events a success. There is something for everyone- decorating, shopping, flower arranging, setting up, cooking, serving, and cleaning up. Receptions and events take a minimum of 8 people and for larger events, at least 20 volunteers are needed. The positions require only 1 to 2 hours of your time, and the reward is building friendships and community- priceless!

Events and Receptions: Throughout the year, Emmanuel hosted a variety of events. Some events are weekly, and others are seasonal.

- Great Pancake Supper
- Lenten Series
- Easter Brunch
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Flowering of the Cross
- Spring Organ Reception
- Parish Picnic- Holy Hoe Down
- August Sunday Series_ Pews & Clues, Blessing Bags, and Stained Glass Art
- Coffee Hour
- Summer Lemonade
- Bluegrass Mass on the Grass with Low Country Boil
- Pentecost Celebration with Gutter Sundaes
- Advent Wreath Making
- Receptions for baptisms, farewell parties, and more

Outreach: Emmanuel partnered with various organizations this year to support their programs.

- Angel Tree
- The Cancer Foundation
- Athens Community Council on Aging
- Blessing Bags

Weekly Wednesday Night Dinners: Throughout the fall, Wednesday Night Dinners were held in the Common Room. Following dinner, activities and classes for our church family were available. Parishioners may come to one or both options.

- Choristers
- Episcopal Youth Community/Club 45
- Nursery
- Friendsgiving Potluck
- Advent Wreath Making
- Gingerbread House Competition
- Halloween Party
- Talent Show

Funeral Receptions: Emmanuel hosts funeral receptions for the families of our parishioners. Volunteers work to create a warm environment to support the family during this challenging time. Depending on size, 8 to 16 volunteers are needed to prepare and organize the event.

⌘ Children's Ministry

Director – Martha Babendreier

Vestry Liaison – Louis Duhe

The children of Emmanuel are an integral and vibrant part of our church community. All children are welcome. Emmanuel invites the children fourth grade and higher to serve as acolytes during the 10:30am service. Emmanuel embraces the children with love and understanding and join them in their spiritual journeys.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

This is a Montessori-based formation program that allows children to experience the church and liturgy through their hearts and hands. They collaborate with trained catechists, interns, and other volunteers to strengthen and grow their relationship with the Good Shepherd.

- 2025 enrollment: Over 30 children
- Two levels: ages 3-6 and ages 6-11
- Volunteers: 2 catechists, 3 UGA student interns, and 9 trained parish volunteers
- Special celebrations included the Epiphany, Liturgy of Light, and Pentecost Celebration.

Children's Chapel

Children's Chapel is held during the 10:30am service for children 3 ½ years through 7 years.

Children share in liturgy, special presentations, prayer, stories, and art projects. They receive a small snack and return to the sanctuary for Holy Eucharist.

We offer two options for the children to participate in formation, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at 9:30am and Children's Chapel at 10:30am. Children may participate in one or both formation opportunities.

Vacation Bible School:

- Theme: Camp Rise and Shine
- Volunteers: 14 volunteers
- Participants: 30 plus children ages 4 years through 5th grade
- Highlights: For four days children were invited to spread their light with others and practice kindness through art, music, movement, games, stories, service, and scripture.

Family Events

Throughout the year, there were several fellowship and celebratory events designed for the whole family, including:

- Great Pancake Supper
- Wednesday Night Dinners
- Easter Egg Hunt and Flowering of the Cross
- Parish Picnic
- Lemonade Sundays
- Lake Day
- Gutter Sundaes
- Blessing of the Backpacks
- Blessing of the Costumes
- Spring at the Robertson's Farm
- Advent Wreath Making
- St. Nicholas Visit
- Christmas Pageant

Outreach: Children and their families organized and helped with service projects throughout the year.

- The children of Howard B. Stroud Elementary School
- Special Olympics
- Athens Community Council on Aging
- Bigger Visions
- Care Bags for the Unhoused

Nursery

On Sunday mornings, experienced and trained staff care for our youngest children, ages birth to 4 years old. The nursery serves typically 5 to 10 children with 4 staff.

Day School Children's Chapel

Children ages 3 to 4 years old have Chapel with Martha and Benji during the school year. We read books, sang, and visited Emmanuel Episcopal Church. We strived to create friendships and build a bridge between the Day School and the Church.

⌘ Youth Ministry

Director – Martha Babendreier

Vestry Liaison – Louis Duhe

Youth gather on Sunday mornings at 9:30am in the Youth Room for breakfast and fellowship. Jack Reynolds and UGA interns lead the youth in discussions and projects based on the curriculum series Re:Form from Sparkhouse. During the 10:30am service, the youth volunteer and work with the children during Children's Chapel and serve as acolytes during the service.

Interns: 4+ experienced UGA Interns who work at Camp Mikell

Youth Participants: 4 to 6 students participate regularly.

Youth Commission: 6 Parents/Caregivers and our Vestry Liaison

Confirmation: 14 youth participated in a spring confirmation retreat and will be confirmed on January 4, 2026

Annual Council Meeting November 6-8: Lucy Hicks, Emmanuel Youth, attended and participated in the conference.

Events: All youth are invited to participate in activities throughout the year. Some of the events included:

- Great Pancake Supper
- EYC Wednesday evenings combined with Club 45 Interns organize activities for the youth and 4th and 5th grade students following a community dinner.
- Spring at the Robertson's Farm
- Lake Day
- Six Flags
- Lock In
- Bowling After Church
- Movie Afternoon

Outreach: All youth are encouraged to help with outreach opportunities within the Emmanuel community and beyond.

- Uniform Drive for Howard B. Stroud Elementary
- Sweet Blessings- Christmas Care Package for Emmanuel Parishioners
- Bigger Visions
- Angel Tree
- Volunteer and work with younger children during Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, and special events.

🎵 Music

It is illuminating to consider the passing year—with its ups and downs aplenty—and to see God with us throughout it all. It is truly a joy to serve a church that sings and one that values and supports its music ministry!

The Emmanuel Choir has shown resilience, even with the loss of several beloved, long-time members. In addition to the choir's leadership during our 10:30am Eucharist, they worked to prepare music for several services of Choral Evensong and seasonal offerings at Easter and Christmas. Beyond their music, I am delighted to see the connections and friendships formed within our musical community. It's a special bunch of folks!

Emmanuel's beautiful Peragallo Op. 777 pipe organ continues to lend its voice to support our services. In March, organist Jason Roberts gave a splendid dedicatory recital (which included an improvisation on "Georgia on My Mind"), demonstrating the full capacity of the instrument. Our organ supported a holiday sing-a-long for the Day School and was the topic of discussion for a local study club group.

In July, we assembled a no-rehearsal-required Summer Choir for the second year. The Emmanuel Choristers, an ensemble for children aged 5 and up co-instructed by Aimée Marcoux and myself, sang on Palm Sunday and on Christmas Eve. They also had an opportunity to sing for the Casa de Amistad class. The Episcobells, a new handbell ensemble directed by Jill Crandall and co-parish effort between Emmanuel and St. Gregory, rehearsed and rang for the first time this year!

Our festive Easter and Christmas Eve services were supplemented by brass, and a variety of instrumentalists offered their music in services throughout the year, including a bluegrass band. Emmanuel has supported area ensembles and studios, hosting concerts for the Athens Flute Choir, the Lux Treble Choir, the ProMusica Choir, and others.

Sing on!

-Dr. Benji Stegner, Organist/Director of Music

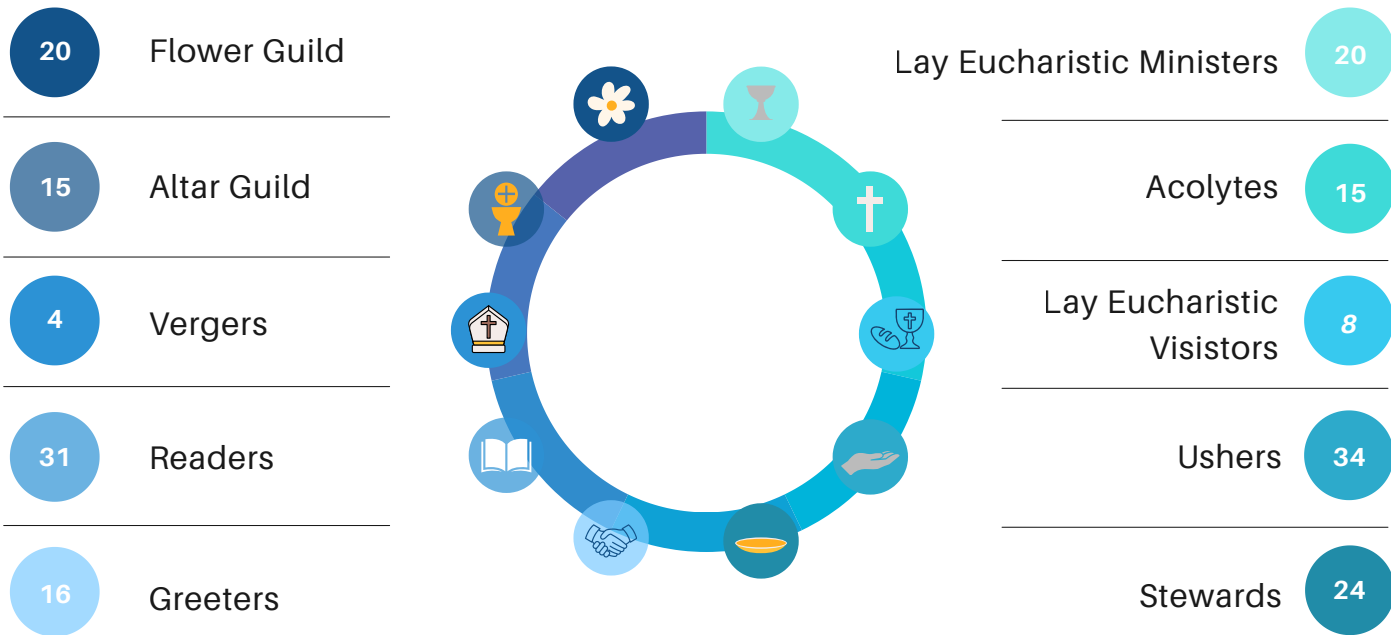
⌘ Worship

Worship Ministries at Emmanuel includes eight ministries that work together each week to assist the clergy in providing welcoming and inspiring worship services. There are currently almost 150 individual parishioners that fill more than 200 roles serving as Altar Guild members, Acolytes, Eucharistic Ministers, Flower Guild members, Lectors, Ushers, Vergers, and Wedding Guild members.

Members of the Altar Guild and Flower Guild work quietly behind the scenes each week to enhance our worship and beautify our spaces. Before each service Altar Guild members set the credence table with everything needed to celebrate the Eucharist. They clean the used vessels after each service and clean and care for the linens used in worship each week. The Altar Guild welcomed several new members in 2025 while several others “retired” after years of faithful service. Members of the Flower Guild adorn our worship spaces and gathering spaces with floral offerings each week. They also create arrangements for weddings and funerals and for community gatherings in the common room. Both the Altar Guild and Flower Guild hold training sessions or workshops periodically throughout the year for current and new members and gladly welcome anyone seeking a way to serve Emmanuel in one of these ways.

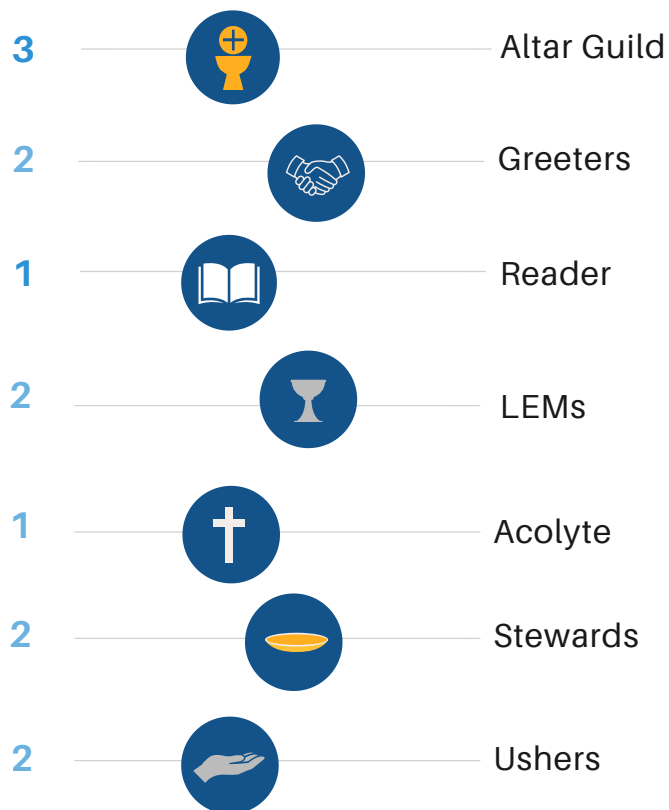
VOLUNTEERS

For Sunday Worship



8:30 A.M. EUCHARIST

A Quick Breakdown

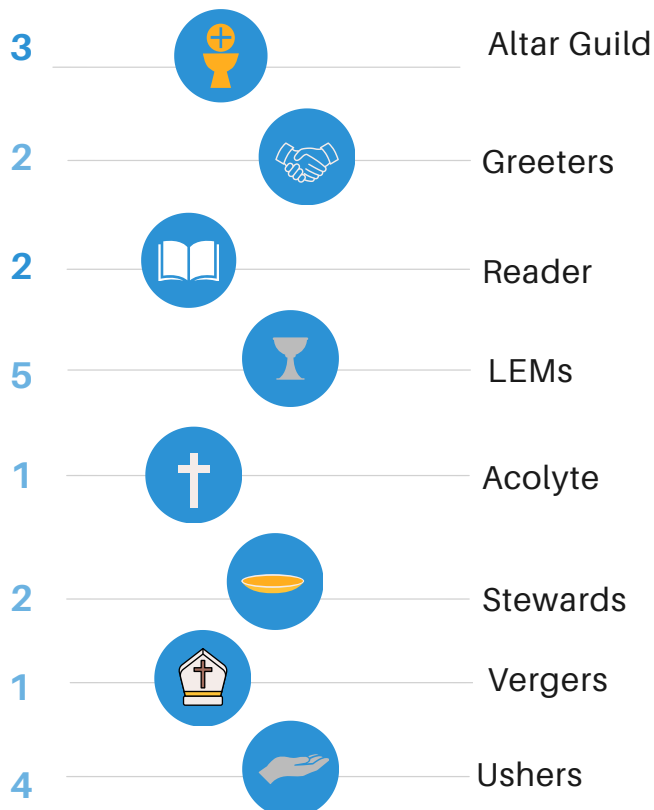


Acolytes (youth and adult), Eucharistic Ministers, and Vergers serve in the Altar party at both weekly and special services. Acolytes assist the Priest during the Eucharist, and fulfill roles such as Thurifer, Crucifer, Torch Bearer, and Gospel Bearer. Eucharistic Ministers assist the Priest in helping to administer consecrated elements as part of the Eucharist celebration. The Vergers ensure that all things related to a service are in place, the right people are on duty, and that the service is ready to begin on time. They often lead the procession and stay attentive to any special needs or circumstances that may arise during the service. Six new youth Acolytes were trained to serve in 2025, and an additional four youth Acolytes were “promoted” to Senior Acolyte status after receiving training on assisting the Priest during the Eucharist. We currently have twenty-one Acolytes (13 youth and 8 adult), 20 Eucharistic Ministers, and 4 Vergers.

Also serving weekly are Ushers and Lectors. Ushers are often the first face someone sees when coming to a service. They distribute bulletins, collect offerings, and generally make everyone feel welcome. Lectors share the designated readings from the Revised Common Lectionary and the Prayers of the People during the Liturgy of the Word. Both roles serve to enhance our corporate worship experience. Our worship roster currently lists 31 Lectors, including 5 newly added in 2025, and 34 Ushers.

10:30 A.M. EUCHARIST

A Quick Breakdown



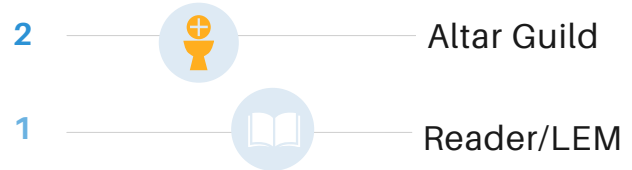
5:00P.M. EVENSONG

A Quick Breakdown



WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST

A Quick Breakdown



WEDDING GUILD



Wedding Guild members assist couples and their families in preparing for the celebration of marriage in the Episcopal community of faith at Emmanuel. A Wedding Director and several assistants are selected from among Wedding Guild members to coordinate each wedding. Once assigned, they assist the bride and groom with the details, expectations, and organization of this important day. They also assist the clergy as needed at the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. During 2025 several weddings were held at Emmanuel aided by the experienced assistance of Wedding Guild members.

As Episcopalians, we acknowledge that the laity are the backbone of ministry in God's Church, and that there are specialized ministries for lay persons who feel called to deeper involvement in sacramental life. All these ministries actively and openly welcome all who feel called to serve in these important roles.

⌘ Pastoral Care

Agape Meals: Multiple families in the parish have been provided meals by this amazing team of chefs. One addition this year was to stock the church freezer with ready-to-go meals when sudden needs arise. A group of 10-12 women, men, and children worked together to prepare, package and freeze meals, and have decided to make this an annual or bi-annual tradition. Leader: Katherine Barrow

Health Ministry: Health Ministry meets monthly via zoom to share healthcare resources and receive updates on various people in need. This group provides information and support to parishioners and families who are experiencing health challenges, whether temporary or ongoing. They offer support to family members of those with memory issues, by helping with referrals and identifying health care professional. On occasion, they are able to accompany someone to a physician's visit or procedure. They also work closely with other Pastoral Care committees, connecting parishioners with meals, prayer shawls, Stephen Ministers, etc. Leader: Robin Johnson

Lay Eucharistic Visitors: In 2025, eight LEVs provided 97 visits to folks in assisted living facilities, hospitals, and homes. This group brings the Eucharist to those who are not able to attend Church, either temporarily or ongoing. At the end of most of the Church services, the congregation sends these ministers out as an extension of our service so that our homebound parishioners may stay connected to their Church family. The LEV's also serve as liaisons to notify the clergy and other pastoral groups when needs arise. If you know of anyone who would like to receive the Eucharist at home, or if you are interested in this ministry, please contact the clergy or our leader, Mary Black.

Prayer Groups: There are several ways to request prayer at Emmanuel. To add your own name publicly, you may call the Church office. First names of these requests are printed for all to pray. The Daughters of the King and the Intercessory Prayer group provide confidential prayer and these names will not be published. You may reach out to a member of the clergy to request prayer from these groups, or for a "clergy only" prayer request. Leader: The Rev. Cheryl Brainard

Prayer Shawl Ministry: This group provides hand knit or crochet prayer shawls to parishioners and non-parishioners in need of extra prayers and comfort. They meet monthly for knitting, prayers, and a time of creative fellowship. Each shawl is blessed and attached with a prayer card. Leader: Pat Hall

Stephen Ministry: Emmanuel's Stephen Ministers continue to provide one-on-one care and support to those in need. The group meets monthly for peer supervision and continuing education. Seven Stephen Ministers are currently serving Care Receivers. This year, one new Stephen Minister was commissioned and another seasoned Stephen Minister, who has served in a previous church, joined the current group. If you would like to discuss the possibility of someone in need of a listening ear, prayer, support and encouragement from a Stephen Minister, you may reach out to our clergy or Co-Leaders: Sue Holt and Debra Harden.

Grief Group: This year, a new group called Living Well in the Midst of Grief was formed as a way to support those who are experiencing a loss. While the current group is primarily made up of those who have lost loved ones due to death, any who have suffered any type of loss, whether from divorce, the loss of health, job, or other, are welcome to attend. For more information, or to discuss ways of processing grief that is right for you or someone you know, please contact the Rev. Cheryl Brainard.

Fellow Flower Flingers: This fun group, which is an extension of the flower guild, was formed to ensure that the beautiful Sunday flowers that our flower guild works so hard to create each week, do not go to waste. The group is included in pastoral care because the flowers go to the homebound, the infirm or bereaved, or when there are extras, to those celebrating significant birthdays. While flowers are not available every week, due to extra weekday events, or seasons such as Advent and Lent where we don't have flowers in the sanctuary, this group does their best to utilize every blossom, stem and green to extend peace and joy to our church family. Leader: Patti Hoyt

Nonagenarian Celebration: This year a small group hosted a luncheon to celebrate members who are 90 years and older. There were 8 in attendance plus their invited guest, whether driver, assistant, or friend. It was a joyful occasion and another annual event in the making.

⌘ Adult Formation

Lenten Book Study

During Lent of 2025, there were multiple Lenten book groups who studied Barbara Brown Taylor's Holy Envy.

Rector's Forum

- Blueprint for a Thriving Church
- Lenten Series - Holy Envy
- Spiritual But Not Religious
- Voices of the Prophets
- Advent Church in a Christian Culture

Sacred Ground

Developed by the Episcopal Church, Sacred Ground is a thoughtful and faith-based program to assist local congregations in facilitating respectful and transformative dialogue on racial issues.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Led by Dr. Edward Bolen. The group studies various parts of the Bible.

Centering Prayer

The Centering Prayer group met on Wednesday mornings at 10:00a.m. in the Chapel, and continued with a time of reflection in the Library.

Introduction to the Enneagram

Led by Rev. Cheryl Brainard met during the fall.

Sacred Ground Book Group

The group read Isabel Wilkerson's the Warmth of Other Suns. Led by Rev. Katie Bradshaw

Natural Spirituality

Heidi Simmonds serves as facilitator. Journey Groups meet each week on Sundays from noon to 2 pm, and Tuesdays from 10 am to noon. Members help each other gain insight into their individual lives by unfolding the symbolic language of their dreams, growing into an ever-deepening relationship with God.

Wednesday Night Programming

- Discerning Our Lives
- Speaker Series Introducing Community Partners
- Episcopal 101
- Book Group - Krista Tippett's Speaking of Faith led by Lane Stewart

Brotherhood of St. Andrew

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew seeks a wide range of activities, both internally, and within and beyond the parish, to bring men and youth to Christ. Our vision is to inspire, share, and equip men and youth to fulfill the Great Commission. The Brotherhood seeks to accomplish our mission through the threefold disciplines of Prayer, Study, and Service. Emmanuel's chapter of the Brotherhood meets in the Church Library on the third Sunday of every month, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. We also get together at a local restaurant for a social breakfast and fellowship at 8:30 am on the first Saturday of every month. All men of the Parish are always invited to attend.

Monday Morning Bible Study

The Monday Bible Study (MBS) group meets at 10:00 a.m. weekly from September through May except for holidays. Each meeting focuses on the scripture readings for the following Sunday services based on the Revised Common Lectionary for the Episcopal Church. Group participants rotate to prepare and facilitate discussions of the scripture readings. Discussion ranges from information about writers of the passages, context of the time and place, geography, and related Biblical history to the meaning the readings hold for us individually and collectively. The weekly discussions encourage all who wish to reflect on how the passages resonate for us in today's world, in a respectful and confidential manner. Group size ranges from 12 to 20. All are welcome to join at any time.



Summer Book Club

In June of 2025 the Summer Book Club met weekly for fellowship and discussion of *Looking for God in Messy Places* by Jake Owensby, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana. The discussion was lively, respectful, and confidential, and allowed everyone an opportunity to participate at their individual comfort level. Weekly participation ranged from 17 to 22. Previous summer selections have included former Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book *Love is the Way* and *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage* by former Episcopal Bishop and Choctaw Elder, Steven Charleston. The Summer Book Club is designed to be flexible, inclusive, and welcoming, inviting all interested participants to join as their summer schedule permits.

⌘ Welcome Ministry

2025 marked the third year of the Emmanuel Welcome Ministry. Ralph NeSmith as the chairperson was joined by Carolyn Morazan, Lynn Crevar, Diane Wahlers, Carol Hilimire, Sharon Jenkins, Donna Edwards and new members Barbara Houze and Jay Shinn to form the 2025 Welcome Committee. The goal of the committee is to create an intentional effort in welcoming our visitors and encouraging them to engage at Emmanuel. The Welcome Committee meets monthly to set goals in this area and measure our progress.

We have Newcomer Cards and pencils in the pews that are replenished weekly as needed. Bill Fox has now constructed and installed new permanent holders in the pews for the cards and pens.

Rev. Katie contacts each newcomer the week after their visit. The cards are then provided to the Welcome Committee for input into a spreadsheet that has profile information. The spreadsheet is updated regularly and sent to the committee and Rev. Katie. Through December 7th, 74 names have been added to the newcomer spreadsheet. While this is an encouraging number of newcomers, we know that not all visitors complete one of the newcomer cards.

The Welcome Committee along with Mary Moore assigns the Greeters through The Scheduler. We have a good group of committed Greeters and plan to invite others to join in this effort in 2026.

We had a Newcomer Brunch in August in the Common Room which was attended by 20 newcomers, several vestry members, several members of the Welcome Committee, and Rev. Katie. The result is that most of those attending are now active at Emmanuel. We plan to have 2 of these Newcomer Breakfast/ Brunch events in 2026.

In 2023 the committee began an effort to have new permanent name tags made available for all in the parish that wish to have one. This effort continued in 2024 and 2025 by having Name Tag Sunday the first Sunday of each month as a time for people to request and pickup their name tags. Everyone is encouraged to wear them often.

In 2024 The Welcome Committee formed a group to improve the Welcome Signage at Emmanuel. The result has been the inclusion of specific parking for visitors and enhanced handicap parking. Now all signage inside and outside the parish has been updated. We also added this year a new Emmanuel monument sign perpendicular to Prince Avenue. This signage project is now complete.

Ralph NeSmith
Welcome Ministry Chairperson

⌘ Bigger Vision

Bigger Vision Athens began in 1998 as an overflow emergency shelter for the homeless during the winter. It has grown to become a year-round shelter for up to 45 guests each night, with the hope that the guests are positively impacted by their experience at the shelter and will have the opportunity to return to being self sufficient. Emmanuel has been a Dinner Provider volunteer for more than a decade and we will continue this commitment in 2026. Every third Sunday of the month, we will grocery shop, prepare and serve a delicious home cooked and much appreciated meal. We have many devoted volunteers, including the Brotherhood of St. Andrew but we continue to need more people to participate in this ministry. Our volunteer needs are:

- Shopping for groceries needed to prepare the meal and delivering the groceries to the church kitchen. A detailed grocery list is provided and reimbursement is through the church.
- Cooking team of 3-4 people, you, friends and/or spouse. The dishes are simple and the time involved is 1-2 hours on a Sunday afternoon.
- Serving team of 4-5 people. These volunteers pick up the prepared meal at the church and delivers it to the shelter where they serve the meal, a total of 90 minutes. This ministry is fun and asks a minimum of your time but is so rewarding in knowing that you have helped provide a hearty meal and a warm smile to those in need.

If you would like to volunteer or need more information, please contact:

Sandy Jarrett
706-340-5385
sandy1070@gmail.com

Jan Neubauer
706-714-7980

Dee Forrester
706-207-1849





⌘ Family Promise

Family Promise of Athens is a non-profit organization committed to providing housing support to families with children who are facing or experiencing the crisis of homelessness. Emmanuel has participated as a host church since its inception and is proud to share that Family Promise has now grown to include two shelter units for emergency needs and two additional units providing up to a year of transitional assistance. This year, Family Promise is focused on increasing its resources for at-risk families facing one-off circumstances that threaten to trigger homelessness, through its prevention program, which offers assistance with rental arrears/ deposits, utility payments, and other wraparound services, as well as expanding its stabilization resources. With our partner, the Catholic Center, Emmanuel prepares and delivers meals on a quarterly basis for both families residing in the emergency shelters, as well as Kroger gift cards for incidentals, and household supplies, together with any special needs from childcare to transportation. These contributions are solicited from a list-serve of interested parishioners, who are apprised of needs and opportunities to contribute. Beyond our four designated service weeks, members of our congregation have collectively provided thousands of dollars in direct contribution to Family Promise this year, including donations of food and Christmas gifts, in-kind donations of time and services, as well as monetary donations earmarked to particular programs/ special needs.

~ Jaime Barnes

- Emmanuel hosted our shelter 4 weeks this year - totaling 24 hot meals for families in shelter
- Emmanuel helped us secure a \$30,000 grant from Episcopal Community Foundation of NEGA to build a new transitional house
- Emmanuel MEMC provided us an additional \$5,000 to help with furniture for the new transitional house



⌘ Thrift House

Our Thrift House continued to operate profitably in 2025, generating over \$24,268 for outreach. The store is open Wednesday through Saturday each week and relies heavily on a corps of 24 dedicated volunteers.

Thrift House Budget	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Budget 2026
THRIFT HOUSE REVENUE			
Sales	\$128,355.19	\$126,000.00	\$125,000
Misc Income	\$278.33	\$300.00	\$300.00
Total Revenue	\$139,472.18	\$126,300.00	\$125,300
THRIFT HOUSE EXPENSES			
Operating Expenses	\$85,763.91	\$91,775.00	\$99,491
Utilities	\$5,609.33	\$7,300.00	\$7,300
Building Projects and Reserves	\$10,000	\$7,000.00	
Total Expenses	\$101,373.24	\$106,075.00	\$106,791
Net Total	\$38,098.94	\$20,225.00	\$18,509

⌘ Day School

In the life of every ministry of the church, there are moments when we are called to pause and reflect honestly at what has been, what is, and what might be. This is the same kind of careful discernment we undertake at certain points in our own lives.

Over the last five years, EEDS has faced significant challenges as it continues to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Before 2020, enrollment regularly stayed between 80–100 children. Since 2020, enrollment has not risen above the mid-70s, and our current enrollment is 61. (We anticipate six new students in January 2026). Financially, the school's year-end results have been (not including the overhead paid by the church):

- 2020: (–)\$43,717
- 2021: \$41,374 (including a \$36,000 PPP loan)
- 2022: (–)\$32,000
- 2023: (–)\$72,017
- 2024: (–)\$18,168

EEDS has now exhausted its reserve funds, and in the summer of 2024, it became necessary to borrow funds from the church to meet payroll. Without the reserve funds the school has always maintained, the need for cashflow will be an ongoing problem.

Given these realities, an evaluation of the school is both responsible and necessary. To assist with this, the Emmanuel Vestry has invited the President of the National Association of Episcopal Schools to help guide us through a thoughtful assessment during our January retreat.

At this time, we do not know where this process will lead. There are many possibilities: we might explore becoming a full-day program, consider adjustments to tuition, imagine a new model for the school, consider a yearly annual fundraising campaign, or even discern that the current ministry is no longer sustainable. True discernment requires us to begin without predetermined answers, and so we are intentionally holding space for the unknown.

Day School Finances 2025		
	Actual	Budget
Revenue		
Tuition	\$205,073.00	\$202,404.58
Other Income	\$17,444.72	\$16,391.25
Summer Camp	\$12,500.00	\$6,902.50
Total Revenue	\$235,017.72	\$225,698.33
Expenses		
Staff	\$208,773.94	\$207,152.83
Operating Expenses	\$13,520.80	\$12,557.91
Maintenance and Janitorial	\$7,168.00	\$8,135.83
Summer Camp	\$5,499.46	\$6,800.00
Total Expenses	\$234,962.20	\$234,646.57
Net Total	\$55.52	--\$8,948.24

⌘ Brotherhood of St. Andrew

Among the many groups within the Episcopal Church the Brotherhood of St. Andrew is the oldest continuing organization having begun in 1883. Our Emmanuel chapter dates to the 1950's. The center of the Brotherhood is in our three disciplines: The discipline of daily Prayer for the spread of the Kingdom among men and youth, the Discipline of regular Study of the Holy Scriptures, and the Discipline of Service to help bring others nearer to Christ.

This past year, 2025, has been a positive and growth year for our Brotherhood. At our January regular meeting, Rev. Katie Bradshaw led us in the Service of Admission of Members as we had several new men on board resulting from our 2024 membership breakfast. This Service of Admission was followed by a social time with the families. In 2025 we held another new member breakfast. We now have 34 members in the Brotherhood. The real blessing of this increased company of Christian men is the great increase in ideas for better and deeper Sharing, Study, and Service.

Throughout the year we maintained several regular activities and commitments. Among those were a social breakfast the 1st Saturday of each month and our regular chapter meeting the 3rd Sunday. After our business session, our meeting's Study component involves reading and discussing Christian- and Bible-themed- books suggested by members.

We committed to hosting the Sunday morning Narthex coffee hour each 2nd Sunday. In the spring and in the fall, we helped with Emmanuel's service to the Bigger Vision food ministry and we participated in the Shrove Tuesday celebration. We also continued our support of Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC). In 2026 we look forward to renewing our partnership with several other local churches to collect items for use in the community through FODAC.

As the year rolled on, we had volunteers at AthFest venues. There were also several ad hoc projects we sponsored such as the Blessing Bags program. In 2026 we plan to offer the Blessing Bags program quarterly. We also look forward to again supporting the Night of Lights at the Botanical Gardens in 2026.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is the recognized liaison between the Episcopal Church and Scouting America (Boy Scouts of America.) In late summer, our chapter was the primary financial sponsor for a weekend "Duty to God" gathering of Cub Scouts from across our local council, the Northeast Georgia Council. More than 25 Scouts--and their parents--gathered at Scoutland Reservation in Gainesville to earn various age-group Protestant and Catholic religious emblems.

We continually look for ways to join with and create ways to be more involved in-service activities with other parish ministries and with ecumenical activities in our area.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is open to all men of Emmanuel. It's an active and supportive group, and participation can be very rewarding. Please consider joining us.

⌘ Vestry Nominees

CASEY COLE HIGGINBOTHAM



My family and I have been grateful to call Emmanuel our home for the past three years. I moved to the area four years ago when I married my husband, Wade, and last year we welcomed our son, Thomas. Planting our roots in this community has been one of the easiest—and best—decisions we’ve made.

Before relocating to Georgia, I taught theology at Lee University in Tennessee for nearly a decade, after completing my seminary studies at Sewanee, The University of the South. Since moving, I have continued my work as a writer and travel regularly to lead classes, conferences, and retreats for schools and churches around the world.

I often say I was “born in a pew,” having grown up in the church and served in ministry for most of my life. Prior to teaching full-time, I served for three years as a discipleship minister and over five years as a Sunday School teacher in another denomination. In 2016, I joined St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Tennessee, where I taught formation classes for five years.

At Emmanuel, I have loved teaching formation and serving as a Eucharistic lay minister. I am grateful to be considered for the vestry and look forward to the opportunity to serve our parish, clergy, and community together.

CALLIE ROGERS



In 2021, my family and I were new to Athens and engaged in the dreaded “church hunt.” My first experience with Emmanuel came through the Day School, where my oldest daughter was enrolled in pre-k. I was immediately taken by the warmth of the teachers and staff, and having grown up in mostly evangelical spaces, very curious about this Episcopal Church just across the portico. It would take a few more years and another daughter at the Day School before we finally (joyfully) came home to Emmanuel. Serving on the Parish Life committee, participating in Sunday formation, and sharing many, many warm meals on Wednesday nights are just a few of the gifts we’ve received from our Emmanuel family. I’m thrilled at the prospect of giving back to the congregation and our community at large through service on the Vestry. Thank you for the great honor of being considered.

Outside of church, I work full time in Chaos Management as a stay at home mom to Shepherd, Ivy and Daphne. You may recognize their faces from that especially lively pew in the 10:30 service. I’m creative at heart, and take great pleasure in making or appreciating art of all kinds, dance and poetry in particular. Cason, my wonderful husband of fifteen years, is my best friend and biggest supporter.

JOHN SCHARFENBERG



I was born in Virginia and grew up in New Orleans. After college, I taught in a boys' boarding school outside of Buffalo, New York. During the Savings and Loan Crisis in the early 1990s, I worked on the Banking Committee for the US House of Representatives. I then rode the boom and bust of the Dot.com Era with Cable & Wireless. Later, I served as a government contractor for the Department of Homeland Defense working on the US Visit Program. In 2007, I returned to teaching high school. I have never looked back. Teaching and working with young people is my passion. Today, I am in my fourth year of teaching Upper School History at Athens Academy.

I come to Athens by way of Virginia where I lived for over twenty-five years. I have raised two daughters, Charlotte and Virginia who are now young adults.

I arrived in Athens in June of 2022 to begin working at Athens Academy and on my second Sunday, I discovered Emmanuel and I have made it my home ever since. I have felt so welcomed. I have enjoyed Evensong, Blue Grass Mass in the Grass, Christmas, Easter, and our wonderful choir. I love the blessing of the backpacks and the Halloween blessing. I am moved every time we have a baptism. I am challenged each week by Rev. Katie and Rev. Clayton. On Sundays, I sit in the back of church and sing poorly, but joyously. I want to be more involved with Emmanuel. It would be an honor to serve you on the Vestry.

MOLLY THOMAS



My name is Molly Thomas, and I am honored to be invited to serve on the Vestry. Growing up in the Episcopal Church, baptized at Christ Church Frederica and raised at St. Thomas Episcopal in Savannah, I am grateful for the strong foundation it provided. I have loved calling Emmanuel my church home ever since moving to Athens in 2008.

My husband, Rans, and I have one son, Wynn, a sixth grader at Athens Academy. He enjoys participating in all of the youth activities, especially Wednesday Night Dinners! Rounding out our family is our golden retriever, May. Professionally, I manage development and alumni relations for the UGA Mary Frances Early College of Education.

Emmanuel is a very important part of my life, and I appreciate the opportunity to step into this role and deepen my involvement in our church community.

COMMISSIONING OF THE VESTRY

THE EXAMINATION

The Presider says these or similar words:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, we are all baptized by the one Spirit into one Body, and given gifts for a variety of ministries for the common good. Our purpose is to commission these persons in the Name of God and of this congregation to a special ministry to which they are called. These persons have been elected to the ministry of Member of the Vestry in this parish.

The Presider then says

Will you be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as this Church has received them? And will you, in accordance with the canons of this Church, uphold and work in harmony with one another and with your Bishop and Clergy?

Members of the Vestry

I am willing and ready to do so; and I solemnly declare that "I am persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and I accede to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church."

Presider You have been called to a ministry in this congregation. Will you, as long as you are engaged in this work, faithfully and reverently perform it with diligence, to the honor of God, and for the benefit of the members of this congregation?

Members of the Vestry **I will.**

Presider Will you be faithful in corporate worship and in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God?

Members of the Vestry **I will.**

THE COMMISSIONING

Presider The Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity.

Presider I am your servant; grant me understanding:

Vestry **That I may know your decrees.**

Presider Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O Eternal God, the foundation of all wisdom and the source of all courage: Enlighten with your grace the Vestry of this parish, and so rule their minds, and guide their counsels, that in all things they may seek your glory and promote the mission of your Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Presider says

In the Name of God and of this congregation. I commission you as Members of the Vestry of Emmanuel Episcopal Church. May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you. **Amen.**



EMMANUEL
Episcopal Church